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ABSTRACT

Because junior high school literature anthologies contain few expository offerings and English texts seldom involve students in critical reading as background for writing, it is up to the teacher to fill the gap. One approach for providing students with critical reading practice is the cloze procedure, which (1) encourages close reading and careful attention to semantics, syntax, mode of writing, sentence pattern, and grammar; (2) is motivational; (3) is adaptable; (4) prompts critical thinking; (5) improves vocabulary and use of context; (6) gives students experience dealing with non-fiction; and (7) gives students background so that they can speak with more authority when writing exposition. By finding versatile ways to use material written using cloze, teachers can provide students with the opportunities to interact with content in ways that will make students more capable, satisfied writers. (Two cloze writing lessons, one for writing a comparison or contrast paragraph and the other for writing a chronologically arranged paragraph, are included.) (HOD)

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From Cloze Reading to Better Writing

-or-

How to Survive Teaching Grammar, Expository Reading
and Writing to Uninformed, Mostly Disinterested Junior High
Students

Since junior high anthologies contain few expository offerings and English texts seldom involve students in critical reading as background for writing, it's up to the teacher to find ways to fill the gap. For me, the familiar cloze has become a versatile model for practicing skills holistically. The sample clozes in this packet were made from the history and literature content with which junior high students interact. Why is the cloze such a powerful survival tool? Some of the reasons follow:

- . It encourages active involvement with close reading and careful attention to semantics, syntax, mode of writing, sentence pattern, and grammar.
- . It is motivational.
- . It is adaptable.
- . It provides a vehicle for critical thinking.
- . It improves vocabulary and use of context.
- . It gives students experience dealing with non-fiction.
- . It is a quick way to give students background so that they can speak with more authority when writing exposition.

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Springing into Writing

The following pages show two writing lessons: The first uses "Colonial Schooling" as a vehicle for writing a comparison or contrast paragraph; the second uses "The Age of Bronze" as a vehicle for writing a chronologically arranged paragraph. Either could be developed into a longer essay.

The lessons show the stages in the writing as they developed with junior high students. One sample paragraph, the result of peer editing and revisions, has been included--mistakes and all.

Several of the sample clozes, adaptable to a variety of reading, writing, and thinking activities, are based on biographical sketches. By finding versatile ways to use material written as clozes, teachers will provide students with the opportunities to interact with content in such ways that the results will be more capable, satisfied writing students.

Steps for Using the CLOZE
Sample Material: "Colonial Schooling"

1. Preread using a modified SQ of SQ3R

Read the heading	\	List as many questions as
Read the title	\	can be elicited from the
Read the first sentence	/	short survey.
Read the last sentence	/	

2. Read the first paragraph together, having members of the class list possible words for the blanks. List optional choices. Discuss. Have the class choose the best word for each blank. Caution them that after reading further, they may change their minds.

Bracket the paragraph. If there is a clear topic sentence, have it highlighted. Note the main idea outside the bracket.

{Point out introductory prepositional phrases, parenthetical expression, and use of or to signal a definition. Discuss what difference the or makes before or.}

3. Instruct the class to continue reading and figuring out the best words for the rest of the reading. Once again caution the students that clues may appear in later sentences or paragraphs.
4. Set a time limit. Students may work independently and get together with a partner just before class discussion, or students may work as partners for the entire time.
5. Discuss each paragraph in the same manner as when you led the class through paragraph one. Make sure everyone understands why one word works better than another.
6. Before continuing with a writing assignment, make sure everyone has a completed, sensible CLOZE.
7. As a prewriting assignment, have students organize the content into a pattern of meaning.

{Possible patterns include making diagramatics, charting, mapping, outlining, timeline sequencing, listing, categorizing, labeling, summarizing...}

The content of the CLOZE and the purpose of the writing will determine the choice of prewriting pattern.

"Colonial Schooling"
From Cloze Reading to Comparison/Contrast Paragraph

Prereading

"Colonial Schooling"

- Introduce "Colonial Schooling" with a modified SQ3R. Follow "Steps for Using the CLOZE."

[Options for prereading include the following:

- "Associations" - Students write as many words as possible that they associate with high school.

- "Five Minute Write" - Students "fluency write" for five minutes on the topic "High School."

- "Prediction" - Students read the first sentence and then predict what will follow.]

Colonial Schooling

Historical Period: Colonization

Lesson: 1 2 3

Skill: CLOZE

Directions: Fill in the blank spaces with a word that you think best fits the meaning of this selection. Be sure to read it over when you have finished to see if every blank is filled and that the words you filled in make sense.

Many colonial children received religious education in school as well as in church. In some places, the church was 1. _____ charge of education. In the Dutch 2. _____, for example, the schoolmaster, or teacher, 3. _____ a leader of the church. In 4. _____ places, the clergyman was the only 5. _____ with enough time and knowledge to 6. _____ any subject beyond the ABC's.

In 7. _____ England especially, religious education was an 8. _____ part of schooling. The Puritans wanted 9. _____ children to read and understand the 10. _____. Very young children learned the alphabet 11. _____ reading short sentences about good and 12. _____. They attended a "dame school"-- a 13. _____ taught by one of the women 14. _____ the community in her home.

Massachusetts, 15. _____ 1647, passed a law that required 16. _____ village of fifty families to have 17. _____ elementary school. This law was the 18. _____ step toward our present-day public school 19. _____.

Later, "grammar schools" --which were really 20. _____ first American high schools--were set 21. _____ by Massachusetts law. Every town of 22. _____ hundred families was to have a 23. _____ school. Grammar schools were for boys 24. _____. These schools were intended to prepare 25. _____ boys for college. The idea of 26. _____ up a school system spread to 27. _____ the New England Colonies and then 28. _____ the Middle and Southern Colonies.

Colonial Schooling

Historical Period: Colonization

Lesson: 1 2 ③

Skill: CLOZE

Even 29. _____ the grammar schools, teaching at first
30. _____ on religion. Students spent much of 31. _____
time studying the Bible. They learned 32. _____ read Greek, the
language in which 33. _____ New Testament was first written. They
34. _____ studied Latin. Many books in those 35. _____
were written in Latin.

After a 36. _____, the grammar schools began to teach
37. _____ geography, mathematics, history, and literature. In
38. _____ New England communities, the clergyman prepared
39. _____ few boys for college.

Responsibility for 40. _____ schools fell on different groups,
depending 41. _____ the colony. In New England, the 42. _____
government ran the schools. In the 43. _____ Colonies, the church in
each town 44. _____ village usually ran the schools.

On 45. _____ Southern plantation, children were usually taught
46. _____ home by their parents or by 47. _____ private teacher,
called a tutor. The 48. _____ might be an educated indentured servant.
Some planters sent their sons to school in England.

Colonial Schooling

Possible choices

Key
Historical Period: Colonization

Lesson:

1 2 ③

Skill:

CLOZE

Directions: Fill in the blank spaces with a word that you think best fits the meaning of this selection. Be sure to read it over when you have finished to see if every blank is filled and that the words you filled in make sense.

Many colonial children received religious education in school as well as in church. In some places, the church was 1. in charge of education. In the Dutch 2. settlements for example, the schoolmaster, or teacher, 3. was a leader of the church. In 4. many places, the clergyman was the only 5. person with enough time and knowledge to 6. teach any subject beyond the ABC's.

In 7. New England especially, religious education was an 8. important part of schooling. The Puritans wanted 9. their children to read and understand the 10. Bible. Very young children learned the alphabet 11. by reading short sentences about good and 12. evil. They attended a "dame school"-- a 13. school taught by one of the women 14. of the community in her home.

Massachusetts, 15. in 1647, passed a law that required 16. each village of fifty families to have 17. an elementary school. This law was the 18. first step toward our present-day public school 19. system.

Later, "grammar schools" --which were really 20. the first American high schools--were set 21. up by Massachusetts law. Every town of 22. one hundred families was to have a 23. grammar school. Grammar schools were for boys 24. only. These schools were intended to prepare 25. the boys for college. The idea of 26. setting up a school system spread to 27. all the New England Colonies and then 28. to the Middle and Southern Colonies.

Even 29. in the grammar schools, teaching at first
30. centered on religion. Students spent much of 31. their
time studying the Bible. They learned 32. to read Greek, the
language in which 33. the New Testament was first written. They
34. also studied Latin. Many books in those 35. years
were written in Latin.

After a 36. time, the grammar schools began to teach
37. more geography, mathematics, history, and literature. In
38. many New England communities, the clergyman prepared
39. a few boys for college.

Responsibility for 40. the schools fell on different groups,
depending 41. on the colony. In New England, the 42. town
government ran the schools. In the 43. Middle Colonies, the church in
each town 44. or village usually ran the schools.

On 45. a Southern plantation, children were usually taught
46. at home by their parents or by 47. a private teacher,
called a tutor. The 48. tutor might be an educated indentured servant.
Some planters sent their sons to school in England.

Charting for Comparison or Contrast

Colonial High Schools	Modern High Schools
- for boys only - college prep only - religious emphasis - set up by law - not compulsory - Greek and Latin studied - Bible - basic text	- for boys and girls - college prep / vocational - free thinking emphasis "separation of church and state" - set up by law - compulsory until 16 - modern spoken languages studied - Bible never used as text

? In what ways are modern public high schools < different from - or - similar to > America's first high schools?

Possible Comparison or Contrast Models

A comparison paragraph stresses how things are similar. A contrast paragraph stresses how things are different. When the topic sentence is concerned with similarities and differences, a paragraph may be developed by comparison-contrast.

MODEL 1: Sentence by Sentence

- *Topic (thesis) sentence
 - .Sentence about first item
 - .Sentence about second item
 - .Sentence about first item
 - .Sentence about second item...
 - *Clincher sentence
- Be sure to use transitional expressions (See samples below)

MODEL 2: Compare/Contrast by Half Paragraph

- *Topic (thesis) sentence
- .Sentences 2, 3, 4... about first item
- Transitional sentence/s
- .Sentences 5, 6, 7...about second item
- *Clincher sentence

MODEL 3: Compare/Contrast Paragraph by Paragraph

Point by point in each paragraph

.....

In noting similarities, use transitions such as also, in the same way, similarly. In noting differences, use transitions such as on the other hand, although, however, in contrast, whereas, but.

"The Age of Bronze"
From Cloze Reading to a Chronologically Arranged Paragraph

"The Age of Bronze"

What more do I need to ask?

"The men of the Stone Age were always eager to try out any new kind of stone to see if it would make better tools than the flint tools they were using."

Write sentence 1
on the board.
Elicit questions.

- . What new materials did they try?
- . Which ones were better?
- . What was wrong with flint?
- . What tools were they making?
- . What was good about flint?
- . Where did they find new materials?
- . How did they know how to use the materials?
- . When did they find better materials?
- . When did they stop using flint?
- . Why were tools so important?
- . Did they find better stones?
- . If so, what were they?
- . Do we still use some of the tools invented during the Stone Age?

The sentences above came from one seventh-grade class.

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The Age of Bronze

Historical Period: Prehistoric Man

Lesson: 123, The Age of Bronze

Skills: CLOZE

Directions: For each number below, select the word that best completes the sentence.

The men of the Stone Age were always eager to try out any new kind of stone to see if it would make better tools than the flint tools they were using. Finally, a material was 1. _____ that was much better 2. _____ stone. Historians believe it 3. _____ first discovered in the 4. _____ of the Nile River 5. _____ Africa.

In the Nile 6. _____, as in other parts 7. _____ the world, pieces of 8. _____ containing copper are sometimes 9. _____ lying loose among other 10. _____. If a man of 11. _____ Stone Age happened to 12. _____ a fire over a 13. _____ of copper ore, the 14. _____ might melt and run 15. _____ in bright drops. The 16. _____ metal probably at first 17. _____ used for ornaments, but 18. _____ last some Stone Age 19. _____ found that it could 20. _____ hammered easily into tools.

21. _____ tools soon become blunt 22. _____ copper is a very 23. _____ metal. Finally, men learned 24. _____ melt another metal (tin) 25. _____ copper. This mixture produced 26. _____ alloy (a substance composed 27. _____ two or more metals) 28. _____ could be used to 29. _____ much better tools. It 30. _____ be shaped easily while 31. _____ and when cooled, it 32. _____ much harder than either 33. _____ or tin. A knife 34. _____ this alloyed metal kept 35. _____ edge better than even 36. _____, because it was not 37. _____ brittle and it did 38. _____ chip. The mixture of 39. _____ and tin is called 40. _____.

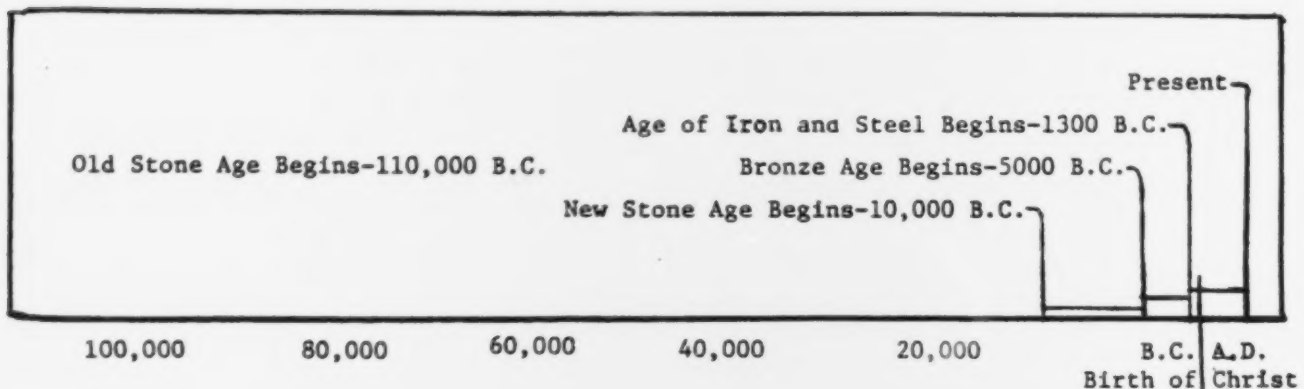
The Age of Bronze

Historical Period: Prehistoric Man

Lesson: 1, 2, 3, The Age of Bronze

Skills: CLOZE

It was about 7000 41. _____ ago that the men 42. _____
the Nile Valley outgrew 43. _____ Stone Age by learning 44. _____
make bronze. With their 45. _____ tools they could do 46. _____
things never possible before. As they traded with other people, the Bronze
Age spread slowly in the lands around the Mediterranean Sea.



Source: Gardner, William E., The New World Foundations In The Old. (Allyn 1964).
p.15.

Directions: For each number below, select the word that best completes the sentence.

The men of the Stone Age were always eager to try out any new kind of stone to see if it would make better tools than the flint tools they were using. Finally, a material was 1. discovered that was much better 2. than stone. Historians believe it 3. was first discovered in the 4. valley of the Nile River 5. in Africa.

In the Nile 6. valley, as in other parts 7. of the world, pieces of 8. rock containing copper are sometimes 9. found lying loose among other 10. stones. If a man of 11. the Stone Age happened to 12. build a fire over a 13. piece of copper ore, the 14. copper might melt and run 15. out in bright drops. The 16. shining metal probably at first 17. was used for ornaments, but 18. at last some Stone Age 19. person found that it could 20. be hammered easily into tools.

21. Copper tools soon become blunt 22. because copper is a very 23. soft metal. Finally, men learned 24. to melt another metal (tin) 25. with copper. This mixture produced 26. an alloy (a substance composed 27. of two or more metals) 28. which could be used to 29. make much better tools. It 30. could be shaped easily while 31. hot and when cooled, it 32. was much harder than either 33. copper or tin. A knife 34. of this alloyed metal kept 35. its edge better than even 36. flint, because it was not 37. as brittle and it did 38. not chip. The mixture of 39. copper and tin is called 40. bronze

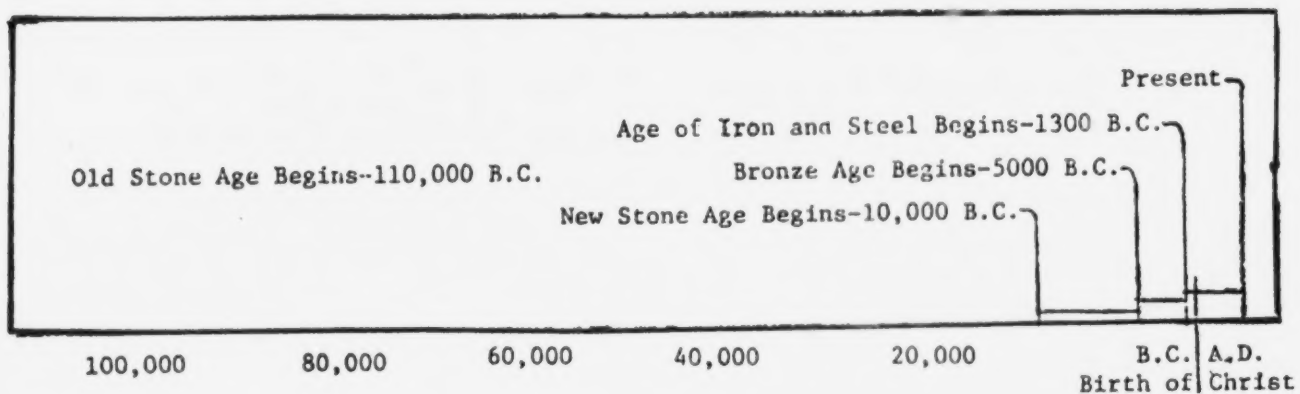
The Age of Bronze

Historical Period: Prehistoric Man

Lesson: 1,2,3, The Age of Bronze

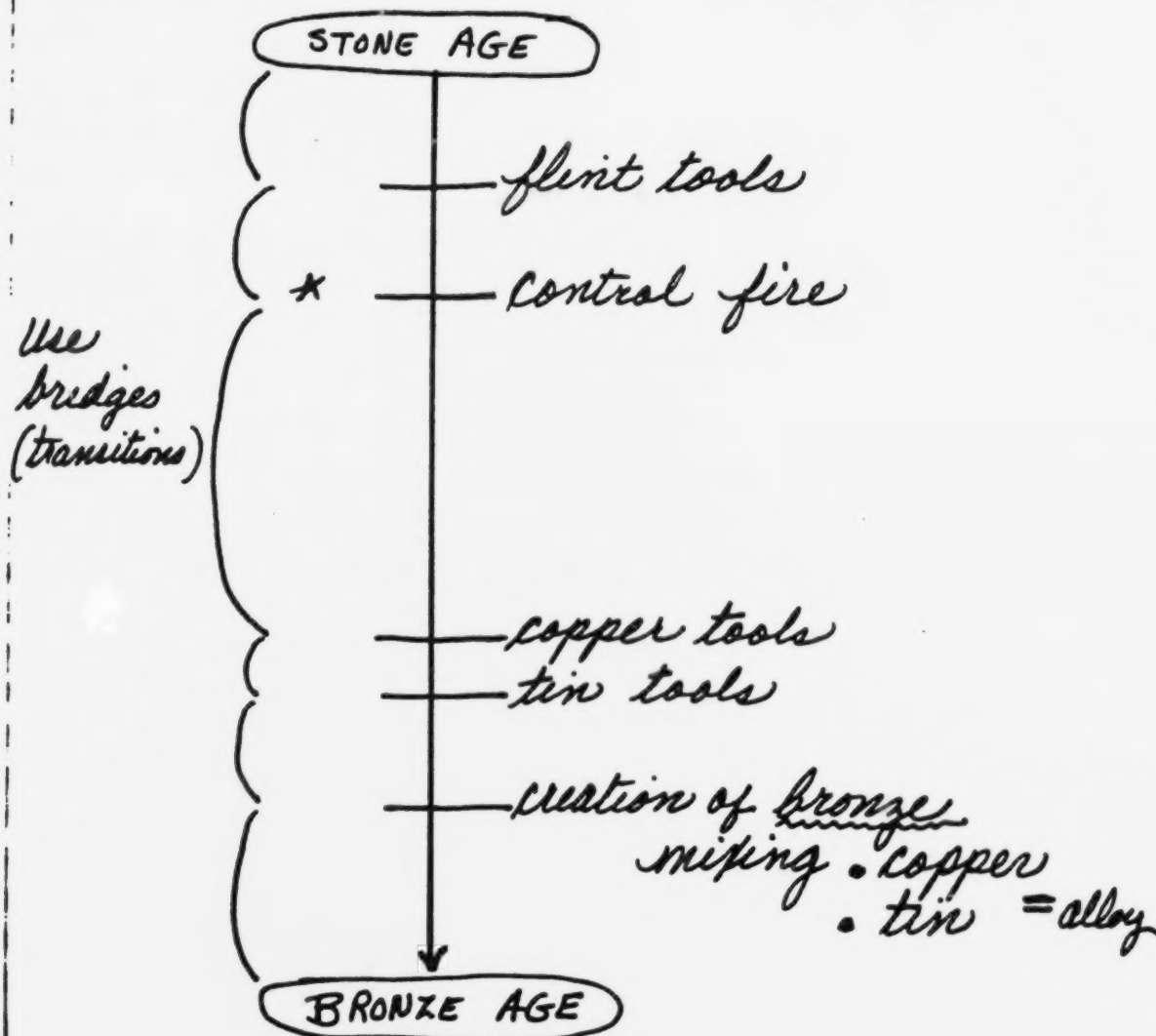
Skills: CLOZE

It was about 7000 41. years ago that the men 42. of the Nile Valley outgrew 43. the Stone Age by learning 44. to make bronze. With their 45. new tools they could do 46. many things never possible before. As they traded with other people, the Bronze Age spread slowly in the lands around the Mediterranean Sea.



Source: Gardner, William E., The New World Foundations In The Old. (Allyn 1964). p.15.

What major discoveries did prehistoric people make in order to advance from the Stone Age to the Bronze Age?



*Fire was not mentioned,
but students must interpret the
content and infer when this crucial
discovery happened relative to the
other discoveries.

"The Age of Bronze"
Generating a Thesis Sentence from A Question

- Generating a thesis sentence from a Question -

What major discoveries did prehistoric people make in order to advance from the Stone Age to the Bronze Age?

- Prehistoric people made several major discoveries in order to advance from the Stone Age to the Bronze Age.
- In order to progress from the Stone Age to the Bronze Age, prehistoric people had to make major discoveries.
- Advancing slowly from the Stone Age to the Bronze Age, early primitive people made vital discoveries.
- Over a long period of time, prehistoric people made major discoveries which advanced them from the Stone Age to the Bronze Age.

The sentences listed above are offerings from one class.

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"The Age of Bronze": Writing Assignment

Write a fully developed paragraph stating the three major discoveries discussed in the CLOZE. Be sure to include the two discoveries not discussed in detail which were necessary for the advancement.

- . Use your mapping
- . Use your thesis sentence.
- . Use Transitions to bridge the sentences
- . Write a clincher.
- . Write a title which reflects your thesis.
- . Follow form and literacy criteria.

- . Reread, edit, revise.

- . Turn in your rough draft and your polished copy.

From Stone Age to Bronze Age

The people of the Stone Age advanced to the Bronze Age by several major discoveries. To begin with, flint tools were a discovery that helped man with his work. Flint was, however, too easily chipped. Fire must have been discovered before copper. This is so because man had to heat the ore containing stones for copper to pour out copper tools were pretty, but they dulled easily. Tin was also found. What they did with it, at first, is not known. Later, however, they melted tin with copper and made Bronze. Bronze was the answer to their problems because it had all the good qualities of copper and tin: pretty color, strong, shiny, and not brittle or blunt. Thus, over tens of thousands of years, prehistoric people made stronger and sharper metals that improved men's lives and brought them into the Bronze Age.

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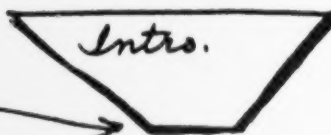
"The Age of Bronze": Possible Model for an Essay
(Model is adaptable for any number of body paragraphs)

From Paragraph to Essay

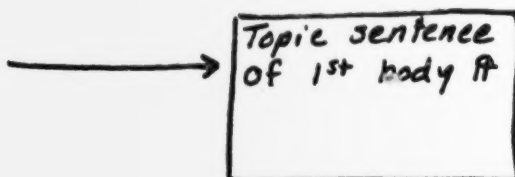
¶

Essay

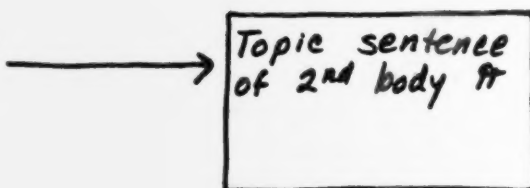
Thesis sentence



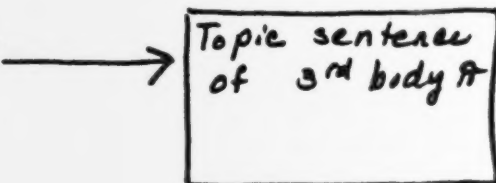
First major point



Second major point



Third major point



Clincher



"What's the difference?"

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